



For immediate release
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Delaware Children's Department Announces Crisis Text Line

New resource available for youth in emotional crisis.

Wilmington, DE – The Delaware Children's Department, Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services (DPBHS), is pleased to announce the establishment of Crisis Text Line, a new tool to help the state's youth and young adults through instances of emotional distress such as depression, bullying, substance abuse, family issues, suicidal thoughts, health concerns and a host of other challenges.

Crisis Text Line offers 24/7 access to crisis counselors through a familiar format that is especially appealing to youth and young adults: text messages. While this confidential service is available to anyone regardless of age, DPBHS has received federal funding to specifically address the needs of young people aged 10-24.

To access this service, Delawareans can text **DE** to the number **741741** and a crisis counselor will respond immediately to provide assistance.

Since Crisis Text Line first launched in 2013, crisis counselors have exchanged over 18.5 million messages nationally with individuals in distress. "This is certainly a service that we want to provide in Delaware for youth and young adults" said Susan Cycyk, Director of DPBHS. The service is free of charge and is funded by foundations, grants, and individuals. A live text message counter is kept online at <http://www.crisistrends.org>.

"Today's youth are forced to grow up so quickly and are all too often faced with a multitude of pressures and challenges with which they are not prepared to handle," said Carla Benson-Green, Secretary of the Children's Department. "Crisis Text Line offers our young people an additional resource where they are able to obtain counseling and guidance any time, day or night."

As suicide remains one of the leading causes of death in Delaware, with one in thirteen high school students attempting in the previous year, the Children's Department, the Delaware Suicide Prevention Coalition and its community partners are committed to addressing the needs of youth experiencing crisis. Funding for suicide prevention services have been provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration through a Garrett Lee Smith Suicide Prevention Grant.

Delawareans under 18 years of age in need of immediate assessment may call Delaware's 24-hour Child Priority Response Hotline at 1-800-969 HELP (4357) or dial 9-1-1 for emergency response. If you are over 18 and need help in Northern Delaware call: 1-800-652-2929. Southern Delawareans may call 1-800-345-6785.

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The Children's Department provides services to children who have been abused, neglected, are dependent, have mental health or substance problems, and/or have been adjudicated delinquent by the Courts as well as prevention services targeted toward all youth. For more information, please visit www.kids.delaware.gov.